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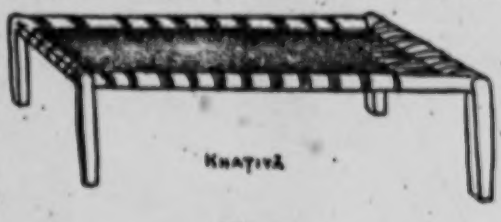
requirements or by religious observances. They do much to break the monotony and to provide a change.

HOUSEHOLD ARTICLES AND UTENSILS. Beds and cots are seldom, if ever, found in Kol houses. Those who dwell near cities, or work in the industrial centres sometimes own a cheap rope cot called a *khaṭiyā*. The head man of the village may own a cot or two, and when one visits a village, this is often brought for the European guest to sit upon. The usual place for sleep is the mud floor of the dwelling. A blanket or mat may be all that is underneath, while in the hot weather not even this is availed of. Pillows are not used, but if it should be desired that the head be raised, it is probable that a small wooden stool a few inches high will be employed.



KHAṬIYĀ

Fig. 5

Chairs, tables and the like, are never found. Anything that must be put away and cannot be hung over the rafters or the bamboo poles stretched across the walls is placed in a wooden chest. One usually finds some kind of a small box about the place which is locked. Valuables, however, are usually buried in a hole in the floor and the same completely *lepoed* to hide all trace of the spot.

The main articles in the house are those connected with food and drink. Gourd vessels are occasionally used as receptacles for storing water, but more commonly such vessels are made of earthenware or brass. Kols do not make either of these. The earthen vessels may be purchased cheaply in the bazaar from people of the Kumhar caste—the traditional potters. Food is also stored in them and in one of the Kol sub-divisions, the *Kurkas*, food should only be taken from a particular type of black earthenware dish. As a rule the various kinds of earthenware vessels are being replaced all over village India by those made of brass and aluminium.

The stone implements are the grindstone and the *sil*. The former consists usually of two pieces of round stone, although the bottom stone may be squarish. The upper stone, which is slightly smaller, is about 16" in diameter. It has a peg for a handle by which it is rotated. There is also a hole into which the grain is poured, though often the stone is simply lifted and the grain spread out over

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some reason or other do not call in a low caste midwife. It was also reported that this group does not make any use of the Hindu priest and is very low in the social scale. Some claimed that this is really a group of Chamars—leather workers in the traditional sense, but Russell and Hiralal do not mention it in their glossary of caste divisions nor does Briggs report it. It is probably of minor significance.

16. *Bhariya* is the same as Bhumiya, see above.

17. *Borowar* does not appear in Russell and Hiralal nor in the list of tribe and caste responses in the 1931 Census. Nor is Barwar found there. Barwar, said to mean "disciple of the *bar* or banyan tree" (*Ficus indica*), is listed among the septs of the Kols in the north by Crooke as was seen in the previous note[1] on his findings. In a later book Crooke speaks of Barwars as a criminal tribe of Oudh.[2]

18. *Pawai*. One group gave the information that this *kurhi* lived in the south, 'Chawhan Khand'. In Singhbhum, Bengal, the Bhuiyas call themselves *Pawan-bans* meaning 'children of the wind'. The Bhuiya highlands are called Pawri Desh.[3] This may indicate a memory of a connection now long lost.

19. *Maubhaiya*. No trace nor information concerning this group could be found. It was reported only once.

The Census of 1891 attempted to record the names of subdivisions of castes in some detail, and the resultant list contained thousands of names of every kind. The Ahir alone had over 1,700 entries. The subdivisions of the Kols manifest the same tendency and show that the groups have absorbed into themselves members from higher and lower castes. The Thakuriyas probably contain a Rajput element and at the other end we find Kols mixed with Khangars, Murhas, Khairwars and Chamars. The Kols of today are probably pretty well mixed with other groups.

MAINTENANCE OF THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE. Kols who live in close contact with city life have frequently lost the sense of social solidarity which characterizes the Kols living under more primitive conditions. Various factors in city life, or near-city life, tend to make the same rigid social order impossible, and yet even under these conditions there is an attempt to maintain something of the older traditions.

Almost every village has an elderly man who may be considered in a sense the head-man of the community. He is usually called *Mahata* or literally, the leader. This man is the natural head of the

1 See page 33.
2 Crooke, W., *Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, p. 166.
3 Russell and Hiralal, *Op. Cit.*, Vol. II, p. 318.

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622 community and has come to be recognized as such largely by his personal worth, wisdom and character. There is no formal election of the head-men; they were recognized as such by a kind of social [624] gravitation. Usually the *Mahata* has an assistant known as the *Chhariberdar*, who does most of the necessary running around. The *Mahata* is not the sole authority and is not empowered to act or even to make decisions of any importance without first consulting the more influential heads of the community. But he usually takes the initiative in calling together the leaders of the local group if factors requiring a meeting come to his knowledge, or if a definite request for it is made.

623 The ultimate authority of the local group rests with the village *panch* or *panchayat*, literally 'the council of five'. The *panch*, however, is not to be thought of as limited to five members only, for it is usually composed of all the influential adult males of the community. They must possess, in the words of the Kols, *"dharam aur dhan"*—piety and property—if they are to be regarded worthy of a place in the *panchayat*. There are however, no elections to the Kol *panchayats*. The leader may or may not recognize one as a member of the group, and while others may attend and even take part in the discussions, they have no right to decide on the ultimate issue.

Practically all major and minor issues affecting the life of the community are decided by the *panch* which thus forms a council for the arbitration of matters pertaining to the community. Its power is really remarkable and the decisions of the *panchayat* are rigidly respected. It is dangerous for a member of the community to go against its advice [626] or decision, for in most cases the *panch* can bring to bear upon the recalcitrant such strong social pressure that he is practically cut off from his community, which means that he is a man without a country or a caste. Personally he may be cut off from all social intercourse, from the use of the well and other village amenities; he is not invited to any functions and is treated as an outcaste. But worse yet, he can neither get his children married, nor admitted into the tribe.

623 Some of the matters which a Kol *panchayat* deals with include
626 the following:

1. Eating and drinking with other castes if such has been forbidden or is against custom.
2. Sexual abberations not approved by the usual Kol practices.
3. Marriage matters: selecting the bride or the bridegroom if there is any difficulty or dispute; arbitration of disputes over financial aspects of the marriage. Irregular unions dealt with and suitable penalties determined.

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159 I have tried to be an honest man and the police and government
[648 forest officers trust me and have just offered me the post of *Sarkari*
● [622 *Muhaddam* (government headman) of my village. This is a very high
554] honour for me for which my friends will respect me very much.

BAJRANJI: A KOL AND A FAMINE[1]

I was born in Rewa, my *desh*, but I have no idea of the date of my birth nor of the names of my father or mother. When my parents left Rewa and came to Barela I was just an infant and didn't know much about what was going on. After three or four years my father died in Lunsar village while my mother died in Barela when I was thirty years old.

When my father died I did not get much property, but whatever I got was used up in feeding the people of the community at the time of his death, and later on more was spent on the ceremonial feast following my mother's death. At that time I had a few head of cattle, but soon after four of them were killed and eaten by tigers.

I have been married twice, and by my first wife had two children. The first child was a girl who is now married and who has children of her own. She is about twenty-one years old now. The second child was a boy who is now about twelve years of age. But when these children were about twelve and eight respectively their mother became
[589] very ill and died. Whatever money I had, all was spent on her for her recovery, but it was of no use. Then I married another wife and
[434] this cost me to a great extent the remaining money that I had. Between the two I spent all the money which I possessed, which was about Rs. 300/- in cash and I found myself moneyless.

When I was a boy I was very eager to learn, but it was very difficult for a Kol to think of studying with the Brahmins. The village school seemed reserved for them. So my parents could not send me and they didn't care much about my education, and though I couldn't
[212] study I made friends with an educated boy and he helped me and I finished the first Hindi book, but that too I have forgotten and cannot now read nor write.

When my mother died there were three of us: my sister, my
[164] brother and myself. Both my brother and sister have since died of plague here in Barela, but I was saved by God's grace. About eight years ago my brother died leaving his wife and children. I do not
[595] keep her with me in our home for I know that it would be hard on me and my wife and that if I keep her it would really mean that there will

1 See plate XXVI.

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159 In those days there was no road to Nagpur, but only a jungle pathway. We went to Nagpur because we heard that a road was to be started
159 there which was going to Jubbulpore and they wanted Kols to do the
464 work. We began to cut the forest from the Nagpur side and came toward Jubbulpore. But due to some *jadu tonka* (the spell of a magician) our Kols began to die and some of us were very much frightened. My father got permission to leave from the doctor and we came back to Jubbulpore another way, by the jungles of Mandala. Since that time we have lived here at Salivara (about six miles from Jubbulpore) where we have broken stones for the roads and done some other work if we have been able to find it.

159 I have seen two generations come and go and the men about us belong to the third. At present I am supervising work among the
[622] Kols of this place who break stones and they call me *Mukaddam* or the head of the village. My financial condition is much better than the other Kols here because I farm a piece of land and have some goats
[342 and cattle. I have a wife living with me but do not live in a house
178] with mud walls, but in a *jhopri* or hut. Why? Because our forefathers lived this way and I too prefer this mode of living.

The above life stories are the simple annals of Kols with varying backgrounds, and are recorded as they told them. They omit many things that one might like to know about, but give an insight into
[123] what seems important to them. These stories were obtained only after long acquaintance and friendly contact.

The sketch of Sunnulal reveals a simple man who has stuck to his village with the opportunities it afforded and who has not attempted to break through his environment into the affairs of the outside world. As a result he is contented, and from the economic point of view has everything a village man thinks necessary. He has never had to meet the stresses and strains of an alien type of life.

Bajranji has vivid memories of the great famine and a mother's successful efforts to avert disaster. He shows the independent spirit of the Kol who would rather make a contract for work than take a daily wage and be bossed around.

Motiram, who lives in the "aboriginal belt" has also successfully maintained his independence and built up for himself a satisfactory economic situation. He respects himself and feels he can boss the *panch* and coerce it.

Phaggu is the sad story of a man who has wandered here and there and at the end has nothing to show for it. He is out of harmony